

INTRODUCTION.

ceremony, and, sometimes, but not so commonly, also on the-author, or reciter, of the prayer.. The blessings prayed for are, for the most part, of a .temporal and personal description,—wealth, food, life, posterity, cattle, cows, and horses, protection against enemies, victory over them, and, sometimes, their destruction, particularly when they are represented as inimical to the celebration of religious rites, or, in other words, people not professing the same religious faith.* There are a few indications of a hope of immortality and of future happiness: but they are neither frequent nor, in general, distinctly announced; although the immortality of the gods is recognized, and the possibility of its attainment by human beings, exemplified, in the case of the demigods termed RIBHUS,—elevated, for their piety, to the rank of divinities. Protection against evil spirits (*EdJcshasas*) is, also, requested; and, in one or two passages, TAMA and Ms office as ruler of the dead are obscurely alluded to. There is little demand for moral benefactions, although, in some few instances, hatred of untruth and abhorrence of sin are expressed, a hope is uttered that the latter may be

repented of, or expiated; and the gods are,
in one hymn,
solicited to extricate the worshipper from
sin of every
kind. The main objects of the prayers,
however, are
benefits of a more worldly and physical
character. The
tone in which these are requested
indicates a quiet
confidence in their being granted, as a
return for the
benefits which the gods are supposed to
derive, from

* Note a, p. 138.